

**The Arts Area: Arts Education in Ontario**

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## Introduction

There are long-standing systemic issues in education regarding which communities have more access to resources and which have less. These concerns include the use of property taxes to determine school funding, high stakes standardized testing, as well as teacher pay and workloads, among other issues. Arts education is just one facet of the wide variety of educational resources that are unequally dispersed between communities: rich and poor, rural and urban, White and non-White. The Inland Empire (IE) contains stark examples of many of these societal and educational inequalities; from a largely low socio-economic status (SES) population, to the inequalities between communities of color and White neighbors, to the area's position in the shadow of Los Angeles. The Arts Area is a four year old nonprofit that aims to bring resources into the IE to support arts and culture in the civic, business, and educational spheres. Our project this summer was to visualize previously collected data about arts education in the IE and create usable tools and resources for The Arts Area to achieve its mission.

In early conversations with John Machado, CEO and President of The Arts Area, we learned that while some very helpful quantitative research was done by the spring semester student researcher, Josh Hui, the organization could better utilize the data if it were presented in a format consumable to non-academic audiences. The Arts Area's current research interest is arts education, so we sought to give potential partners a snapshot of the Inland Empire as a region, as well as the state of arts education in California as a whole compared with the 3 school districts closest to The Arts Area: Ontario-Montclair, Chaffey Joint Union High, and Chino Valley Unified. When examining the previous data collected by Hui, we used a Critical Social Justice

lens. This framework allowed us to question the data and understand it in a larger context in order to best advocate for arts education in the IE.

This paper is structured to lay the groundwork through a review of arts education literature and the issues that surround arts access. We then describe the Critical Social Justice framework in more detail, followed by a description of the community of focus and their needs. The process of data visualization is described in Methods and a discussion of data in Findings. A summary of our analysis and recommendations are presented in the Discussion section. The Conclusion presents our concluding thoughts. We begin with our own positionality as researchers to ground ourselves and the work in the knowledge that no one is truly objective and everyone comes to their work with their own lived experiences.

### **Researchers' Positionality**

#### *Arie Levine*

I am a straight, able-bodied, White, Jewish-American, cis woman from an upper-middle class background. While I am a Californian, Ontario and the Inland Empire is a very different version of California than Berkeley and the Bay Area, where I was born. My positionality has made it easy for me to participate in institutional spaces, both artistic and academic. I was introduced to the arts as a young child and had access to it throughout my education. I have fit in easily into a career in the arts, in which most of my colleagues are White and many are female. I have very rarely felt discrimination for any of my identities. While my ancestors fled their homes in Eastern Europe more than a century ago as refugees from pogroms, my immediate family has benefited from Jewish assimilation into Whiteness. My grandparents bought property and went to college, in part through the GI Bill following World War II. They amassed wealth and

education that allowed my parents to do the same. This, in turn, has allowed me to get a debt-free education and have a safety net while I pursue my passion for the arts. Through my life experience, I know that these privileges aren't afforded to most, and I believe that a debt-free education that encourages critical thinking and creativity should be available to all. It is from this position I approach my work with The Arts Area and the Ontario and Inland Empire communities.

*Ariana Mungia*

My positionality in society has been granted to me through the perseverance of those who came before me. My family, my culture, my privileges, and my experiences have shaped me into who I am and how I function in this world. I am a cis-gendered able-bodied heterosexual female who identifies as Latina. I have a passion for arts education and the power the arts have to create change and heal others. My personal interest and past experience motivate me to support The Arts Area in any way possible. It excites me that this work is happening in the Inland Empire. I am from the Inland Empire but all my experience has been in Los Angeles or Orange County. I am excited to be able to contribute to a cause that I am passionate about in my community. My bias, however, is assuming that this is my community. Although I share in The Arts Area's passion and I am from the IE, I have only recently become proximate with the issue of arts advocacy in the IE. I have not engaged in hands-on work in the Ontario-Montclair, Chaffey Unified, and Chino school districts or in local arts events. I am a guest to what it means to advocate for the arts in the IE.

## Literature Review

A robust arts education creates a multitude of opportunities for students to succeed not only in school, but also in life and in work. According to Rabkin & Hedberg (2011) in *Arts Education in America*, children in the United States saw an increase in the proportion of those with access to the arts in schools from the 1930s through the 1970s, however, there has been a steep declining trend from the late 1970s through today. “Childhood arts education in schools increased across much of the 20th century as Americans became better educated as a people, and that it has declined since the late 1970s, as school reform and fiscal constraints made arts education a lower priority in districts across the country” (Rabkin & Hedberg, 2011, p. 45). The 2002 implementation of No Child Left Behind further exacerbated inequalities in this area; emphasizing the importance of reading, writing, and math by using them as measures of “Adequate Yearly Progress” and therefore deemphasizing all other subjects, particularly those that are not assessed. Today, there is less arts taught in the classroom, fewer opportunities nationwide, and unequal access across communities than there was 20, 30 or 40 years ago. “If we marginalize all non tested subjects, we create a system in which only the most affluent members of our society have access to the most comprehensive and well-rounded educations, which widens the achievement gap, rather than closes it” (Beveridge, 2009, p. 6).

Indeed, while these declines have affected all American children, the effects have not been felt across the board. “Childhood arts education has not been equally distributed by SES or race. Its decline has been concentrated among low-income children and among African American and Hispanic children in particular” (Rabkin & Hedberg, 2011, p. 46). The United States Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics conducted a

congressionally mandated study on arts education in public K–12 schools. The data was collected during the 2009-2010 school year and was compared with previous data from 1999–2000. The study found that schools with the highest percentage of free or reduced-price lunch-eligible populations (an indicator of SES) are significantly less likely to provide students with access to arts education at both the elementary and secondary levels (Parsad & Spiegelman, 2012). This means that the students who would benefit the most from arts education are receiving it the least. In this way, arts education is no different from any other kind of educational resource; the students who already have sufficient means provided by their families receive more and the students from lower income backgrounds are only given crumbs in comparison.

There is a proven impact between involvement in the arts and beneficial outcomes for young people with their peers, in college, and throughout their lives; particularly for those of who are low SES. A 2012 report by Catterall et al., “The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth: Findings from Four Longitudinal Studies,” synthesizes data gathered between 1988 and 2010 from “four large national databases to analyze the relationship between arts involvement and academic and social achievements,” (p. 8). They found that across the board, “teenagers and young adults of low [SES] who have a history of in-depth arts involvement show better academic outcomes than do low-SES youth who have less arts involvement. They earn better grades and demonstrate higher rates of college enrollment and attainment,” (p. 12). While the causation may not be known, what is clear is that the arts lead to prosocial outcomes for students. In fact, arts education can positively affect an entire school culture, especially student motivation, attitudes, and attendance which encourages students to stay and succeed in school. *The Arts Education*

*Navigator: Facts and Figures* offers some explanations based on the work of Catterall et al. to explain the lower dropout rates among arts-engaged students:

- The arts reach students who might otherwise slip through the cracks.
- The arts reach students with different learning styles.
- The arts create a feeling of connection and cooperation between students.
- The arts create schools that are exciting places for learning and discovery.

(Engebretsen et al., 2013, p. 7)

These are outcomes that any region wants for their students, but of course, not all areas have the same resources to help them succeed. The Inland Empire is a prime example of a region with many low SES families and students who have been denied resources. Luckily, the IE has an organization that seeks to fight to bring creative resources to the region.

The Arts Area is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose vision is “Making Art Work For Everyone.” This involves opening access to academic and economic resources that would not otherwise be available to artists and students in untapped communities, thus engaging in three central themes of economic and social justice: equitable access, opportunity, and personal accomplishment (*The Arts Area Story*, n.d). These pillars are interrelated in a cycle that has the ability to promote the success of the overall community. Located in the Inland Empire of Southern California, The Arts Area serves San Bernardino, Riverside and East Los Angeles counties.

The Inland Empire, along with Los Angeles and the San Joaquin Valley “ have the lowest educational attainment rates in the state, and six in 10 low-income California students live in these three regions” (Central Valley Higher Education Consortium, 2018). In addition, the IE has

not been able to recover from the 2008 recession resulting in the region having among the lowest income and education completion rates and the highest economic inequality in California. While the full effects of the economic distress caused by COVID-19 related closures will not be clear for many years, the IE is positioned to be hit very hard by another great recession. Although business industries are evolving in the region, they have not developed to the point of stability. “The share of [the IE] population living below the federal poverty line has exceeded the U.S. and large metropolitan region averages since 2008” (Shearer et al., 2019, p. 13). Therefore, there is an unequal balance between growth and a continued high rate of joblessness and poverty. These economic issues only exacerbate educational inequality, including arts access, in the region as taxes have a direct relationship to school funding.

Regardless of an area’s economic positionality, equitable access to arts education in school helps students achieve their full potential by increasing engagement, improving academic performance, and developing young people into well-rounded human beings. Having a school system that values the arts creates citizens who will continue to participate in the arts throughout their lifetime. However, if the community is not built to support a creative industry, then the artists and creatives will move to other areas leading to a creative brain drain. This is the case in the IE, where many cities in the area lack developed public arts and culture policies and community arts councils. Artists either commute to Los Angeles, leave the region altogether to partake in another city's creative economy, or leave the arts in favor of more steady work in the region. For the local creative economy to grow, there needs to be opportunity so artists and those interested in the arts do not have to seek it elsewhere. None of this is possible without a focus on arts education in public schools in the region.

It is known that the arts have the ability to positively impact different aspects of a community. Indeed, they “have an important role to play in the regeneration of areas whose residents are disadvantaged economically, socially, culturally, and environmentally” (Kay, 2000, p. 423). We assert, however, that this potential can only be reached when it is combined with social awareness which requires a framework that not only expands upon ideals but, most importantly, practices social justice. Critical Social Justice is a blend of understanding the relations of unequal social power and action towards a more socially just society. Utilizing a critical approach to social justice “recognizes inequality as deeply embedded in the fabric of society (i.e., as structural), and actively seeks to change this” (Sensoy and DiAngelo, 2017, p. 23). This framework supports the analysis and discussion of equitable access to arts education on macro and micro levels, acknowledging that there are systemic inequities that are being reinforced in the decline of arts education.

There is a great need for a comprehensive assessment of arts education access in the Inland Empire counties; school by school and district by district. Data will allow us to see which schools are offering classes in arts education, what student participation looks like in these courses, and the demographics of those enrolled.

To begin to increase access and equity in art education, school districts should ensure that every school in their district has a dedicated Pre-K through twelve arts program, and establish a minimum number of required hours per week of arts education in every elementary and middle school (grades K-8), along with a professional arts program in high schools (grades 9-12) (Andrews, 2017, p.8).

An analysis of whether access to arts education is equitable and where there are gaps to fill will provide an understanding of arts education in the Inland Empire. In addition, progress can be documented once we have this initial baseline data.

Former The Arts Area Intern, Joshua Hui, began an initial collection of data during the spring of 2020 in the city of Ontario, the home of The Arts Area. He found that Ontario school districts follow the state averages for availability of arts education with 40% of students participating in the arts (p.16). Access to and participation in arts education, however, is often inequitable. Hui found that while large traditional (not alternative) high schools had relatively high numbers of arts courses, middle schools had low to no available arts (p. 21). In addition, Hui found that Ontario schools which have a high level of students enrolled in the Free and Reduced Lunch Program have little to no access to arts in school (p. 24). California data matches the data from Ontario, which emphasizes that equitable access to arts education is a state-wide issue (p. 16). In 2017, Ontario had a poverty rate of 16.2% with a median household of \$57,544. (*Data USA*, n.d.). There is a wide wealth disparity within Ontario; the area contains both higher and lower household income families.

The wealth associated with the location of school districts within Ontario affects the money and resources available to each school. McLaren (2003) questions: why “are schools funded on the basis of property taxes, which ensures that the children of the wealthy and privileged will inherit better schools in terms of resources, teacher salaries, clean building, ect.?” (p.190). Geography plays a role in student opportunity as it influences external factors that have an effect on in-school resources. Property taxes, strength of local economy, and related environmental conditions are beyond the control of the schools, yet impact school funding. In an

area such as Ontario where the wealth is unevenly distributed within a struggling local economy, each district then has access to different amounts of funding. Since arts education is considered an enrichment subject, it is not given priority and other subjects and extracurriculars may take priority in the budget. This can influence the availability of arts classes, access to arts teachers, and arts materials. As a result the location of schools affects student opportunity to participate in quality arts education.

Given the demographics and needs of the Inland Empire, providing an equitable arts education that aligns with California state standards should be made a priority. There is potential for growth and improvement that will not only benefit the students, but the wider community in the long term. This work can only be done if there is a strong baseline understanding of access to arts through research. Our analysis of the currently available data is guided by the following principles of Critical Social Justice as defined by Sensoy and DiAngelo (2017):

- All people are individuals, but they are also members of social groups.
- These social groups are valued unequally in society.
- Social groups that are valued more highly have greater access to the resources of a society.
- Social injustice is real, exists today, and results in unequal access to the resources between groups of people.
- Those who claim to be for social justice must be engaged in self-reflection about their own socialization into these groups (their “positionality”) and must strategically act from that awareness in ways that challenge social injustice.

- This action requires a commitment to an ongoing and lifelong process (Sensoy and DiAngelo, 2017, p.23).

For our summer research, we continued Hui's work by focusing on a specific segment of the Inland Empire: the city of Ontario and adjacent school districts. Ontario is located in San Bernardino county, which has an estimated population of about 2.2 million and 54% of residents identify as Hispanic/Latino (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019). In 2018-2019, Ed-Data reported that in San Bernardino county, 71.1 % of students were eligible for free/reduced-price meals and according to the 2018 Census data, the overall poverty rate for San Bernardino County is 14.9%. The demographics of the county and student population are important to understand because, as stated above, social groups, such as race and class, often determine who has access to society's resources.

As described in Hui's findings, there is unequal access to arts education in Ontario. This is a form of social injustice, as these students, who are primarily Hispanic/Latino and low SES, are being denied a resource in society. Arts education has become a privilege afforded to wealthier schools whose families are able to subsidize the cost of arts education. The communities who do not have equitable access to arts education are the ones who would benefit the most from it. The Inland Empire, however, has been struggling to obtain funding for the arts. According to an article in the San Bernardino Sun, "out of more than 1,300 grants awarded by the [California] Arts Council last year, only 24 of them went to arts projects here" in the Inland Empire (Rutherford et al., 2019). The majority of the funding goes to Los Angeles, San Francisco, and San Diego counties. Directing a larger portion of existing arts funding to the Inland Empire will not only create more access but also boost the local economy. In order to

establish systematic and sustained arts planning, funding, and policies, there needs to be an in depth study about the specific needs of each school, district, and county in the Inland Empire. This is the work Hui started and we hope to continue with The Arts Area moving forward. John Machado, CEO and President of The Arts Area noted that the Inland Empire, along with the Central Valley, are the top regions in California that have been identified by the Council as areas of need (personal communication, June 10, 2020).

It is vital to have an understanding of what arts access looks like in Inland Empire counties in order to provide support for the arts in public schools. A Critical Social Justice lens places the data of inequitable access to the arts in the Inland Empire in relation to the structural inequities embedded in society. This macro and micro-level examination exposes disparate availability and access to arts education in Ontario schools, districts, and counties. Arts education is shown to improve student academic success at finding better jobs, earning degrees, and even volunteering, especially for low SES students. Arts education is not only beneficial to fostering student success and prosperity but also is essential in cultivating a thriving community. Through programming and support, The Arts Area continues to confront the structural inequalities, inadequate education preparation, and challenging economic conditions of the region.

### **Methods**

Hui collected some baseline data on the Ontario schools within the three school districts (Chino Valley Unified, Chaffey Joint Union, and Ontario-Montclair) and their general access to arts education. Given limitations on conducting new research including the short timeframe of the class (5 weeks), social distancing safety restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the simple fact that school is not in session during the summer, we proposed that the most helpful

thing we could do for The Arts Area would be to synthesize data gathered in the spring semester into a series of infographics (Appendix A, B) which can be presented to potential funders, civic partners, and even the general public via social media.

In the United States' current system of education, equity and broad access to arts education cannot be achieved without public and private dollars to support. The Arts Area has begun to play a critical role in advancing arts learning within Inland Empire public schools. Another aspect to addressing the inequities in arts education is public relations; spreading awareness of the current availability and access of the arts in Ontario's schools. To do this, we have visualized the data that was previously gathered, using elements like simple, eye catching charts, graphs, and maps. Data visualization tools provide an accessible way to see and understand trends, outliers, and patterns in data. For The Arts Area, we created a one sheet infographic and charts for each school district in the organization's branding colors. Our visualization of previously captured data will assist The Arts Area in conveying the problems they seek to address to funders, such as the California Arts Council, to get the support needed to do their work. We have provided them with polished and editable digital files, so the graphics can be updated with new data and information going forward. We hope that telling the story of arts education access in the Inland Empire through data will help The Arts Area move toward their goal of creating change and addressing the unequal access in relation to race, location, and socio-economic status.

### **Findings**

We began the infographic by providing a short explanation of how education contributes to building a creative economy, one of The Arts Area's main goals for their work in the Inland

Empire. As stated on the organization's website: "The creative industries are those industries that comprise the creative economy, defined as the businesses, organizations, and individuals involved in producing cultural, artistic, and design goods and services" (*The Arts Area Story*, n.d). The foundation of a creative economy is built through education and The Arts Area seeks to be a hub for educational and business oriented services for students, artists and creative professionals in the region. Education supports the individual by fostering the creative spirit, problem solving, and critical thinking skills during the school-age. This creative spirit develops into a need to participate in the arts and have a community that supports the arts. When a community values a diverse and innovative atmosphere, it creates a dynamic community that people are proud to be a part of. The arts have the power to bring people together and can encourage civic engagement. Focusing on the creative economy in the Inland Empire provides a new pathway to foster the strengths of the community. As stated in their mission:

"The Arts Area believes the foundation for lasting economic development begins with a dedication to education and skills development, strengthening pathways to attending college, supporting careers in the creative industries, and building the needed infrastructure for a growing creative economy. The results of which will promote an economically viable and creative arts community that is an invaluable resource to students, artists, and the community at large. This is a long-term commitment to vitalize artistic and cultural awareness, stimulate innovation and entrepreneurship, and reassert a sense of hope, pride, and accomplishment in the future of the community. (*The Arts Area Story*, n.d).

The Arts Area has taken on the challenge of advocating for equitable access to arts education in the Inland Empire. As the organization is located in Ontario, we focused on the three major school districts in the city: Chino Valley Unified, Chaffey Joint Union High, and Ontario-Montclair. There are two other school districts adjacent Ontario that we excluded because only 2-3 schools in those districts are located within Ontario city limits. We felt that adding these districts would not be truly representative of the arts access in Ontario and may skew the data comparisons. Since we are taking a Critical Social Justice approach, we have discussed, challenged, and visualized the data. Examining the data in the lens of this framework allows us to not only notice where there are gaps in the data but address the gaps in order to promote equitable access to arts education.

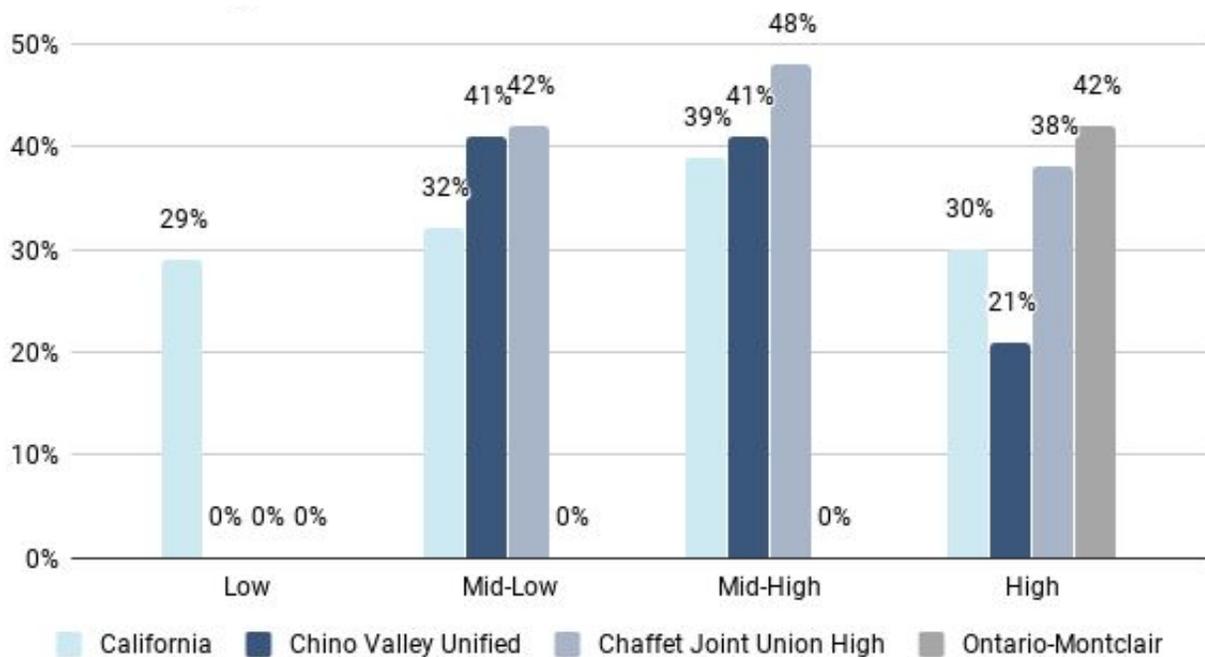
Originally, we compared California data and the three school districts data in the following categories: enrollment by free lunch, percentage of student access to all four required arts disciplines (visual arts, music, dance and theatre), and enrollment by arts discipline. Through a series of revisions, however, the final infographic includes data on enrollment by arts discipline, arts enrollment, and percentage of student access to all four required arts disciplines. Figures 3 and 4 dive deeper into the data's nuances by examining the difference in arts enrollment by school level (middle, high, mixed).

The enrollment by free lunch graph showed the differences via quartiles: low, mid-low, mid-high, and high. We thought this to be important because free lunch is an indicator of SES. A school with a high free lunch rate will also have a student population that is either at or below the poverty line. Equitable access means that any student, no matter their demographic, has the same opportunities as a student of a different SES. When that data was visualized, however, it did not

read well and was not easily understood. In addition, there did not seem to be a strong correlation between SES and arts access within these particular districts. As a result, we removed this graph from the infographic.

**Figure 1**

*Enrollment by Free Lunch*

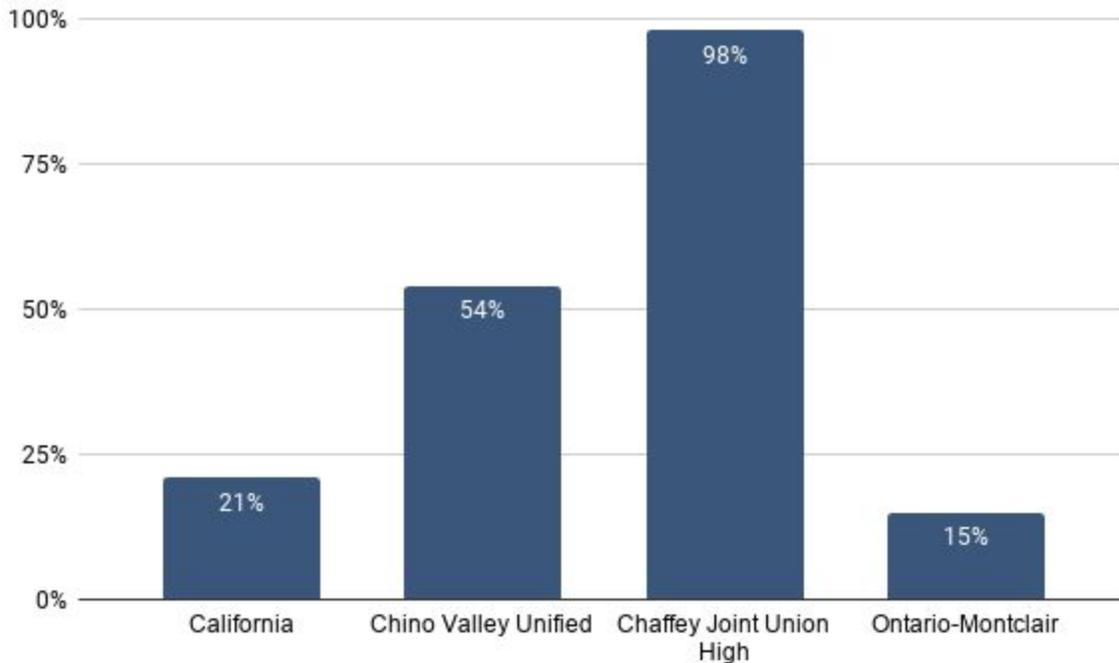


The next comparison we studied was students' access to all four arts disciplines required by the State of California Department of Education: music, dance, theater, and visual arts. According to data gathered by Create CA, California's statewide arts education coalition, all students in the three Ontario-adjacent districts of study have 100% access to arts education (meaning at least one class in one discipline is offered at each school) but they do not have equal access to all required arts disciplines. California Education Code 51210, 51220 states "The

adopted course of study for grades 1-12 shall include visual and performing arts, including instruction in the subjects of dance, music, theatre, and visual arts” (Brothers, 2017, pg. 4).

## Figure 2

*Percentage of Student Access to all 4 Required Arts: Visual Arts, Music, Theatre & Dance*

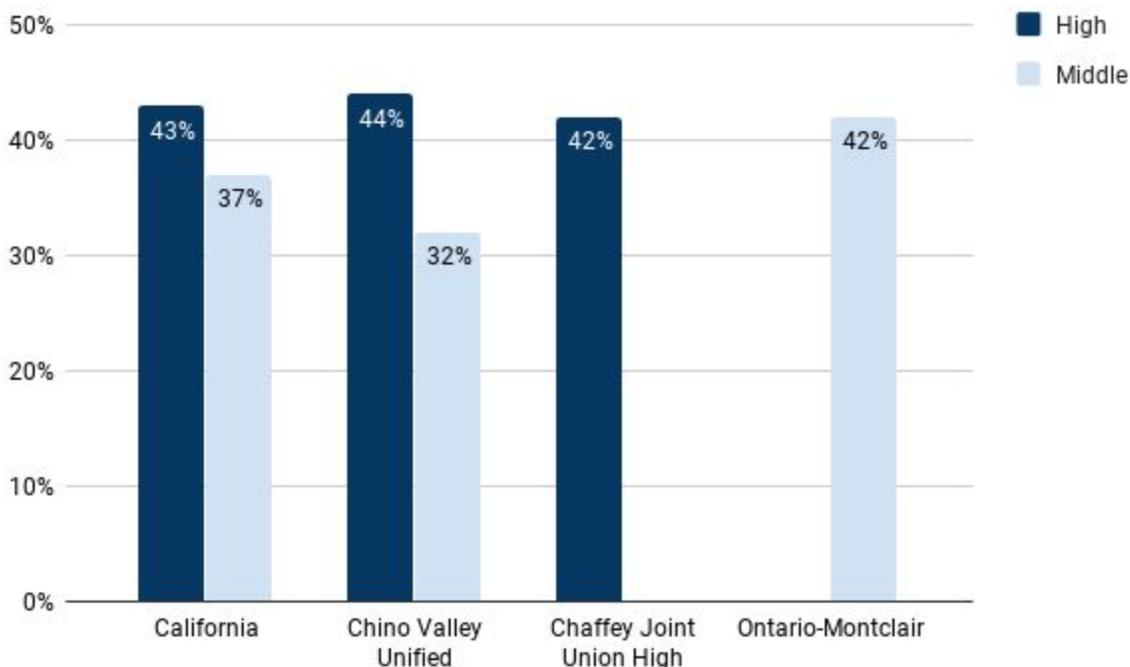


The fact that none of the three Ontario districts nor the state average have 100% access to all required arts disciplines emphasizes that there is a lack of equitable access. The percentage of students, however, who have access to all four required arts is much lower for the state as a whole and, of course, varies by school district and region. Analyzing further, one factor in the difference of arts enrollment is grade cohort. Chaffey Joint Union High only contains high schools and Ontario-Montclair only contains middle schools. On the whole, high schools are much more likely than middle schools to have arts classes offered. Acknowledging this factor allows for another form of analysis about the difference in access based on grade level.

Unfortunately there is no equivalent arts education data available for elementary schools, therefore this is an area that requires further research.

**Figure 3**

*Arts Enrollment by Grade*

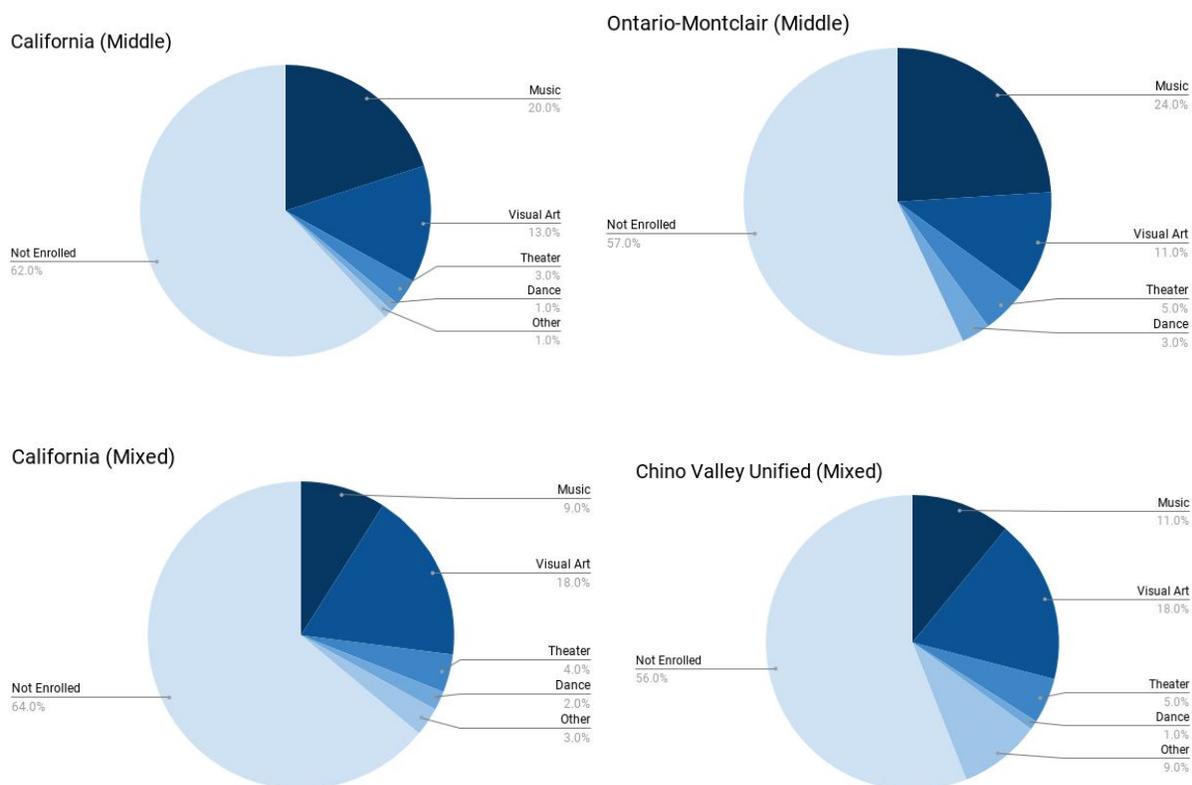


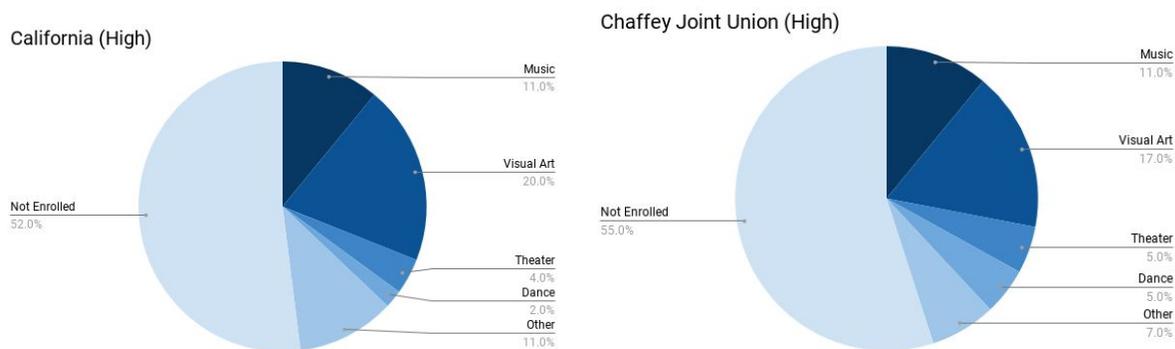
The next set of data compares enrollment by arts disciplines. This data shows that not all students in the Ontario-adjacent districts of study have the option of exposure to all of the different art forms. The enrollment is affected by the number of courses offered in each school, which is explained further in the pages (Appendix B) we created which go into more granular detail for each school in the three districts. The series of pie charts emphasizes that the majority of students are not enrolled in any arts courses at all. Music and visual arts tend to have much higher enrollment rates and number of courses offered than dance, theater, or other arts (graphic design, filmmaking, stagecraft etc.). These statistics unfortunately do not note if any one student

is enrolled in multiple arts courses at a time, which could skew the data. It is probable that the 5% of students enrolled in dance at a school, for instance, are also enrolled in theatre or visual arts courses. There is a level of uncertainty about who is being portrayed by the numbers we have gathered. That being said, if there is an overlap, there may be more students who are not enrolled in any arts courses and are therefore not represented in the data. Examining the data as is, it is clear there are a large number of students who are not enrolled in any arts courses at all, which is an area of concern.

#### Figure 4

##### *Enrollment by Arts Discipline: Middle vs. High vs. Mixed*





As referenced above, we created a series of charts (Appendix B) that provide specifics on each school in the three districts. The categories represented are: access to all four required arts, total school enrollment, enrollment in any arts, percentage arts enrollment, total number of arts courses offered, and enrollment and course count for each arts discipline (visual arts, music, dance, theatre, and other). We wanted to showcase what access to the arts looks like on the individual school level. This provides a more holistic picture of the nuances in arts access that is not represented in the overall district data. Understanding how many courses are being offered in comparison to total enrollment paints a more accurate picture of how many students are able to enroll in a course. This specific data seemed odd to us. Many schools had only one or two courses offered for each discipline and often listed an enrollment of over 100 students. While this might make sense for activities like choir, orchestra, or a big school musical, the data is suspect for smaller classes. In any case, presenting this information allows us to make a macro to micro level examination of arts access in the cities surrounding Ontario.

### **Discussion**

Originally, The Arts Area CEO John Machado asked us to describe the racial and socio-economic demographics of the students who have access to the arts. After close examination of the available resources, we realized that this data does not yet exist. We know

how many students are enrolled in an arts course, which type of arts, and specifically what the course is (band, choir etc.). We know the overall student demographics along racial lines for each school and district. We do not, however, know the racial or socio-economic breakdown of enrollment in arts courses and therefore we cannot examine the next layer of equitable access.

Studies have shown the majority of students enrolled in the arts tend to be White even when the school is majority students of color (Elpus & Abril, 2011). There is a possibility that within these districts, only a small demographic of students are participating in the arts. In addition to anecdotal evidence for all artforms, we learned that “certain groups of students, including those who are male, English language learners, Hispanic, children of parents holding a high school diploma or less, and in the lowest SES quartile, were significantly underrepresented in music programs across the United States” (Elpus & Abril, 2011, abstract). As outlined in the Critical Social Justice framework by Sensoy and DiAngelo (2017), exploring the racial difference in arts access directly addresses the ideas that “Social groups that are valued more highly have greater access to the resources of a society” and “Social injustice is real, exists today, and results in unequal access to the resources between groups of people” ( p.23).

Education generally and arts education specifically is a societal resource that is available to groups that are valued more highly in society: i.e. middle-class and wealthy White families. Further data in this area will create a clearer picture of the representation of students participating in the arts. We would propose the creation of a survey that would ascertain the demographics of the students who are enrolled in each arts course. There is also the possibility that a dataset such as the Educational Longitudinal Study might assist in gathering this

information. We hope to continue this research ourselves or at least hope that this paper will assist future students in gathering the needed data.

After going through the process of examining data and creating the infographics, we realized that we were forcing a deficit-based story. We wanted to create work that would help The Arts Area obtain funding and we felt the best way to do this was to show the needs of the three Ontario districts and where they were lacking in arts access. The data did not agree with a deficit approach. The data shows that the districts are in alignment with California's statistics and in some areas are even better than the state averages. Moving forward, we are going to embrace an asset-based approach to showcase the strengths of the schools. Through acknowledging the qualities of the districts that foster arts engagement, we are better able to address the needs of the schools and where The Arts Area can best advocate for artists and arts interested students. Machado also noted to us that we may find more disparity as we explore other districts within the Inland Empire (personal communication, July 1, 2020).

### **Conclusion**

Overall, through the process of comparing existing data, we realized that despite Ontario's challenges relating to equitable educational access, the arts are an area that meets state averages. There is certainly room for improvement statewide; all students deserve access to a variety of arts courses in addition to other extracurricular and enrichment activities to grow into creative, thoughtful citizens and critical thinkers. Perhaps the amount of arts education that is already offered in local schools provides The Arts Area with an even stronger foundation to pursue their main goal of bringing creative jobs to the region. If 40% of students in Ontario are enrolled in arts courses in any given year, their arts interests are already primed and when they

graduate into the workforce are more likely to seek creative careers. If jobs in the creative industries are drawn to the Inland Empire, many of these arts-interested students may stay and continue to build creative communities within their hometowns.

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## Appendix A

# ARTS EDUCATION IN ONTARIO

## 2018-19 SCHOOL YEAR

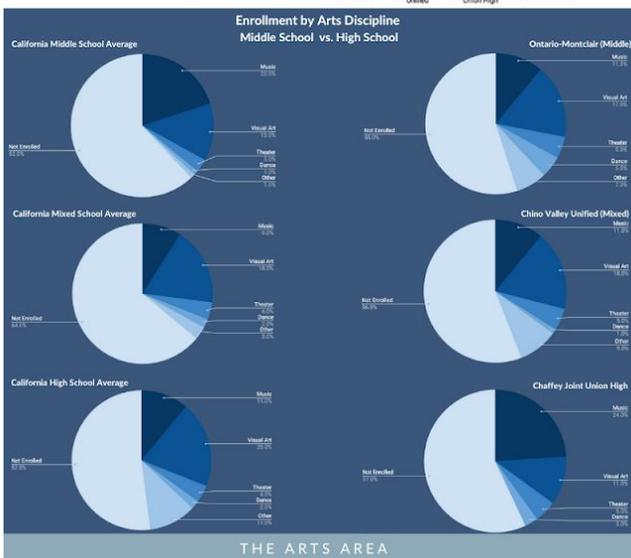
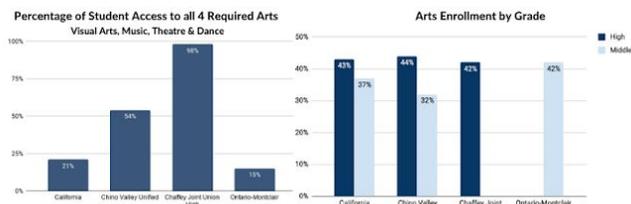
### THE CREATIVE ECONOMY



### THE INLAND EMPIRE

- The Arts Area is located in Ontario, a city in the Inland Empire of Southern California.
- The Arts Area serves San Bernardino, Riverside, and East Los Angeles counties.
- The Inland Empire has one of the lowest educational attainment rates in the state.
- The Inland Empire, along with the Central Valley, are the two least funded areas for the arts in California.
- Most of Ontario's schools are split between 3 districts: Ontario-Montclair (Middle School Only), Chaffey Joint Union (High School Only), and Chino Valley Unified.

### ARTS EDUCATION IN 3 ONTARIO SCHOOL DISTRICTS COMPARED TO STATE AVERAGES



## Appendix B

## Chaffey Joint Union High

School	Access to all 4 Arts	Enrollment in Any Arts		Music Enrollment/ Course Count	Visual Arts Enrollment/ Course Count	Theatre Enrollment/ Course Count	Dance Enrollment/ Course Count	Other Arts Enrollment/ Course Count	Total Number of Arts Courses	
		School Enrollment	% Arts Enrollment							
Chaffey High	Yes	3229	1273	39.42	235/3	535/7	279/1	149/2	244/7	20
Ontario High	Yes	2419	1003	41.46	230/3	536/6	114/1	166/2	43/4	16
Colony High	Yes	2191	1066	48.65	229/4	369/9	142/1	154/2	311/6	22
Alta Loma High	Yes	2545	1227	48.21	261/3	471/6	134/1	114/2	388/11	23
Los Osos High	Yes	3053	1380	45.20	379/3	780/9	140/1	119/2	38/6	21
Montclair High	Yes	2885	980	33.97	247/4	416/7	141/1	110/2	131/5	19
Etiwanda High	Yes	3524	1518	43.08	588/4	494/6	165/1	113/2	278/11	24
Rancho Cucamonga High	Yes	3433	1310	38.16	402/2	437/9	153/1	183/2	183/7	21
Valley View Continuation High	No	399	111	27.82	0/0	91/2	13/1	0/0	12/6	9
Chaffey District Online High	No	84	18	21.43	18/1	0/1	0/0	0/0	0/0	2

# Chino Valley Unified

School	Access to all 4 Arts	Enrollment in Any Arts		% Arts Enrollment	Music Enrollment/ Course Count	Visual Arts Enrollment/ Course Count	Theatre Enrollment/ Course Count	Dance Enrollment/ Course Count	Other Arts Enrollment/ Course Count	Total Number of Arts Courses
		School Enrollment								
Chino High	No	1846	914	49.51	158/3	564/4	190/3	0/0	391/4	14
Chino Hills High	Yes	2773	1196	43.13	270/4	457/5	159/3	16/1	363/3	16
Don Antonio Lugo High	Yes	1659	717	43.22	51/3	298/5	42/1	58/2	214/2	13
Ruben S. Ayala	Yes	2744	1114	40.60	409/4	385/3	137/2	49/2	0/0	11
Canyon Hills Junior High	No	1087	358	32.93	153/3	149/2	56/1	0/0	421/8	14
Magnolia Junior High	No	793	236	29.76	78/1	118/1	0/0	0/0	26/1	3
Romona Junior High	No	574	72	12.54	72/2	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	2
Robert O. Townsend Junior High	No	1074	512	47.67	161/1	290/2	61/1	0/0	0/0	4
Woodcrest Junior High	No	412	94	22.82	40/1	54/2	0/0	0/0	0/0	3
Boys Republic High	No	99	27	27.27	0/0	27/3	0/0	0/0	0/0	3
Buena Vista Continuation	No	160		52.50	0/0	84/3	0/0	0/0	0/0	3

# Ontario-Montclair

School	Access to all 4 Arts	Enrollment in Any Arts		Music Enrollment/ Course Count	Visual Arts Enrollment/ Course Count	Theatre Enrollment/ Course Count	Dance Enrollment/ Course Count	Other Arts Enrollment/ Course Count	Total Number of Arts Courses	
		School Enrollment	% Arts Enrollment							
De Anza Middle	No	517	130	25.15	130/2	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	2
Oaks Middle	No	820	205	25.00	161/2	0/0	0/0	45/1	0	3
Serrano Middle	No	849	213	25.09	188/3	0/0	27/1	0/0	0	4
Vernon Middle	Yes	700	413	59.00	86/3	113/1	161/1	11/1	0	6
Vina Danks Middle	No	667	237	35.53	116/2	127/1	0/0	0/0	0	3
Ray Wiltsey Middle	No	1003	711	70.89	412/3	252/1	47/1	0/0	0	5